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Check It Out! Library Newsletter, Spring 2018

Johnson & Wales University - Providence

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Check it out! Library Newsletter

Launch of “Ask a Student”

In addition to the thousands of questions asked of JWU librarians *in person* each year, more than 2,000 questions are asked through the ‘Ask a Librarian’ IM app.

Most of the questions are about how to find scholarly or trade publications related to classwork, but it’s not uncommon for librarians to also field other types of questions, from how to register for classes, or how to use *Smarthinking*, to replacing a lost ID. The variation in questions seems endless.

One thing is clear: today’s student loves using IM to ask for help, whether with complex research or for getting quick directions. Recent studies suggest that today’s student also loves to get help from other students.¹

Launched this spring, a new chat app was made available on the [JWU Library homepage](#), giving users the chance to decide for themselves whether to “Ask a Librarian” or “Ask a Student.”

ASK A STUDENT



Treated as a pilot, the new service started on a small scale, with just three of JWU Library’s most experienced student employees receiving the training and authorization to respond to questions through “Ask a Student.” The option will only be visible to library website visitors when any of the students who have undergone the specialized training are actually available to respond to questions.

JWU librarians will be carefully monitoring the service in order to assure the quality of responses, evaluate the types of questions that get asked student-to-student, and to assess the popularity of the new service. ♦

1. Pugatch, T., & Wilson, N. (2018, February). Nudging study habits: A field experiment on peer tutoring in higher education. *Economics of Education Review*, 62, 151-161.



Morris Gaebe on Gaebe Commons

The Sound of JWU History

If you have ever spent any time on Gaebe Commons, you will no doubt have seen the statue of the eponymous **Morris J.W. “Mo” Gaebe**, who served as president and guiding visionary of this institution from 1969-1989, and then as chancellor until not long before his death in October 2016.

An audio recording of Gaebe is now available for all to hear, having recently been rediscovered, digitized, and uploaded to the Oral Histories collection of the ScholarsArchive@JWU.

A promotional piece titled, “Take Five: The Five Steps to Success,” it was originally produced as a 45 rpm vinyl record, and likely intended for radio broadcast. Due to age and handling of the record over the years, the sound quality had been compromised by scratches and other distortions to its surface. Now, thanks to the skill of digital services librarian **David Meincke**, the quality of the digital version is quite good, so that the tone and timbre of Gaebe’s voice come through loud and clear.

Click [HERE](#) to listen to the recording.

So listen and read, and ask yourself how much of what Gaebe says about Johnson & Wales is still true today. ♦



Raising Our Voices against Sexual Assault: Embrace Your Voice

April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month. JWU Library is once again partnering with JWU Counseling Services to educate the campus about sexual assault prevention, the consequences of sexual assault, and how to support sexual assault survivors. ♦



Sexual Assault Awareness Clothesline display (Downcity Library)

First Year Students Share Their Stories

In the summer of 2017, research librarian and adjunct faculty **Sarah Naomi Campbell** met with assistant professor of English, **Evan Villari**, to pitch the idea of a “for-students/by-students” podcast featuring the experiences of JWU First Year students. Villari decided to make this idea an assignment for the inaugural Sound Production class, and the JWU Podcast was born.

Discussing their idea, Campbell said, “As A&S adjunct faculty for the past four years, I’ve been honored to teach first year students in ENG1020, 1021, and 1030. One of the most rewarding aspects of the role is the opportunity I get to read first year students’ incredible stories of resilience and success. It struck me that these stories—which are heartwarming, inspirational, and at times amazingly vulnerable—should have a wider audience.”

Campbell continued, “The first year in college is filled with challenges. From finding friends and a chosen family, to pursuing academic passions and balancing life/work responsibilities, first year students experience change in many ways. It occurred to me that creating a podcast could

(Continued next column)

highlight these voices, and provide a way for the stories to find the larger audience they deserve. It’s also my hope that any new student hearing about the struggles and successes of other first year students would know that they are part of a supportive JWU community, here to help them thrive in their first year!”

In fall 2017, Campbell invited former first year students, whose stories had struck them as particularly poignant, to join the JWU Podcast project for the winter term. Each student was then assigned as the “VIP client” to a group within the Sound Production course. With students as producers, directors, and editors, each group developed the concept and tone of the podcast in collaboration with the former first year students telling their stories.

For one of the podcasts, **Ollie Huth, ’17**, shared their experience of coming out at JWU in terms of gender identity. Later, Huth remarked on the Sound Production team’s ability to create a safe place in the studio. The powerful role the group played in shifting the tone of the piece in turn shifted Huth’s own perspective of their coming out experience: “I always looked at my coming out story as sad; it always hurt to talk about it. But with the theme of being “happy,” suggested by the production team, I realized my story had a sort of happy ending. Doing the podcast changed the way that I look at my own story.”

Creating an environment in which Huth felt comfortable was easy for group members **Michael Dinh, ’20, Grace Ducasse, ’20, Tom Green, ’19, Joshua Ryan, ’18, and William Connor**. Speaking of their approach, Dinh credited his team’s focus on “coordination, gratitude, and consideration ... [in] creating an environment that allowed for such an intimate conversation.”

The collective dedication in the face of later challenges also stood out. When it was discovered that the initial recording had technical problems, the team decided to re-record, post-presentation, based on the integrity of the project and their shared passion for the story.

Look for Huth’s story and those of the other students featured in JWU podcasts, coming soon to the [ScholarsArchive@JWU](https://scholarsarchive.jwu.edu/). ♦